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# PLEASING PROSE

*By*

CAROLYN WELLS



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ONYX SERIES

PLEASING PROSE



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# PLEASING PROSE

By

CAROLYN WELLS



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## PLEASING PROSE

### A TROUBLESOME ERRAND

"JOHN," said Mrs. Bassett, as they sat at breakfast in their pretty suburban home, "we must have a new hoe. Shall I order one from Moneymaker's by mail, or will you go up there to-day and get one?"

"I'll go and get it, my dear. A hoe is rather an important implement, and should be carefully selected."

At noon, therefore, Mr. Bassett went uptown to Moneymaker's department store, and inquired of the affable floor-walker where he might find hoes.

"Street floor, third aisle to the left," was the reply, and John Bassett marched on, thinking how much more methodically a man shops than a woman.

But when he reached the counter he saw nothing but stockings.

"I beg pardon," he said to the pompadoured saleslady, "I was mistakenly directed. I wish to see hoes."

"Right here, sir," said the pompadoured one. "Twenty-five cents a pair."

"Oh," said Mr. Bassett, a light breaking in on him. "I don't mean that kind of hose. I mean just common, ordinary hoes."

"These are the cheapest we have, sir. Twenty-five cents a pair."

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"But I mean hoes; I don't want a pair. I only want one."

The girl stared.

"We never separate a pair of hose, sir."

"If you did, would they be half-hose?" said Bassett, unable to quell his humorous instinct.

Again the salesgirl stared haughtily, and Mr. Bassett hastened to add: "I beg your pardon, I'm sure. But I don't mean this kind of hose at all. I mean garden hoes."

"You could wear this kind in the garden," said the girl accommodatingly, and Bassett turned away in despair.

"Look here," he said to a floor-walker, "can't you tell me where to find hoes. Garden hoes, you know, to use in the country—in a small garden."

"Certainly, sir. You'll find what you want in the basement, at the foot of these stairs."

Downstairs Bassett marched, and, after arriving at the department indicated, found himself surrounded by a fine assortment of large reels of rubber hose.

"Where can I find hoes?" he exclaimed, gazing at the clerk in exasperation.

"Right here, sir. Will you have black rubber, brown rubber, or electric hose?"

"Not that kind; I mean hoes, for a garden, you know."

"Yes, sir. This is our best garden hose."

John Bassett looked at the clerk.

"Never mind," he said; "I've decided I don't want to look at hoes, after all. I'm going to buy a rake."

## THE SUMMER GIRL AND THE SAND

**T**HE Summer Girl was a body of beauty, entirely surrounded by men. They all lounged on the sand; she wore a bloonwite bathing-suit, and the men wore plain blue.

The conversation had only one trend. They were trying to convince her of their eligibility, and she was trying to bang it into their heads that she wouldn't marry any of them, if every one of their numbered hairs were hung with a diamond.

Of course this was not a matter of bald, definite proposal and refusal. That had many times been done before with each one. But, all undismayed, they showed patience, perseverance, and pertinacity in whatever way offered at the moment.

There were four suitors present this morning, and, in their rudimentary costumes, you could scarcely tell them apart.

But, as a matter of fact, one was a millionaire, one was a dandy, one was a genius, and one was a brute.

Naturally, the girl liked the brute best, but she had no intention of marrying him.

Well, they pressed their suits, if you know what I mean, subtly and blatantly, spasmodically and everlastingly, till the girl was nearly crazy.

At last, in desperation, she said: "I'll tell you what! I'll be a princess in a fairy-tale, and I'll

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marry whichever one of you will answer truly a question I shall ask."

"Go on!" said the brute, scowling at her, while the others looked askance or something like that.

"I will marry whichever one of you," she said, beaming impartially upon the quartet, "can tell me truly whether the number of sands on the sea-shore is odd or even."

"Huh!" said the other three, but the genius looked at her earnestly.

"Will you promise that?" he asked in tense, thrilling accents.

"Yep," replied the girl, carelessly; "but of course you must prove your answer to be true."

"Oh, of course. And I'll even do more than you've asked. You know, there's more or less change in shifting sands, so I'll tell you whether the number is odd or even at a given moment, and at another given moment. And I shall assure you beyond all doubt that I am telling you the truth. If I do this, will you marry me?"

"Yep," said the girl, humoring his bluff.

The genius sprinkled a few grains of sand on his blue-flannel knee.

"Observe," he said quietly, "this is one moment." Then, with a sharp penknife, he divided a rather large, flat grain of sand into two grains. "It is now another moment. I assert positively that in one of those moments just passed the number was odd and the other moment it was even. Can you doubt or deny it?"

"But which was which?" asked the millionaire pettishly.

## THE SUMMER GIRL AND THE SAND

"I didn't agree to tell which was which," said the genius. "Girl, you are mine!"

"I am yours," agreed the girl; "and I'm glad of it. With such diabolical ingenuity as that to help me, I feel sure I can manage to retain my position as president of our woman's club."

## ON HEN-MINDEDNESS

OF course, a paper with the above title can only be written by one who has devoted hours to the earnest study of hens' minds.

Incidentally, it may be remarked that hens' minds are represented by much the same quantity as snakes in Ireland. But we are considering, not the individual mind of a concrete hen, or even the collective mind of an abstract hen, but the quality of hen-mindedness frequently seen in its perfection among our best feminine humanity. To discuss the subject intelligently we must cast at least a passing glance at the humbler biped from which it derives its name.

The hen, the normal domestic hen, has no practical working knowledge of the great movements which aim for the world's uplift, for our country's good and for the betterment of mankind. She hasn't an exhaustive understanding of the Higher Intensive Culture or of the True Value of Ethics.

But she has a beautiful, an inimitable way of appearing to be intent on the above important matters.

She pauses in thoughtful concentration, she wags her pivot-set head in an ecstasy of large appreciation and then makes a vigorous and energetic dash across the road. She races madly, if need be, or, indeed, if need be not; but unless cabin'd by chicken-wire walls, she determinedly crosses the road. Why she



## ON HEN-MINDEDNESS

elects to cross the road is as unsolvable a problem as that relating to the gentleman with the iron mask. Trivial answers have often been suggested, but they are merely foolish persiflage and have no bearing on the hen's real motive.

In so far as a hen may be said to have a definite purpose, it is to cross the road.

Of course, this purpose is innate, and obtained in hendom long before the days of motors. But the advent of the automobile makes no difference in the purpose. Crossing in front of a motor car means merely accelerated celerity of motion, and of this a hen is instinctively capable, and it in no way interferes with her intrinsic hen-mindedness.

In fact, hen-mindedness is merely a blind, doggedly persistent impulse to cross the road and make as much fuss as possible about it. To the hen's mind all desirable things are across the road; ethics, culture, social prominence and perhaps the suffrage.

Small wonder she dashes madly across; and if, baffled, she is forced to turn back, why that's only an opportunity for ostentatious fluttering and squawking and repeated mad attempts.

No understanding has she of the meaning of "lost motion"; no glimmering suspicion of what is meant by "increased efficiency." Her mind, single to one intent, urges her virtuously and gloriously to cross the road.

That is her goal, her Mecca, and in a proud burst of self-glory she attains it. And then? Ah, then shows the true henniness of the hen mind, and, incidentally, the *raison d'être* of the road—she is now ready to start again on her great crusade of crossing the road—and the road is there to be crossed.

## THE POET'S LOVE

**A** H, me," said the Poet, "I would that I could realize these fair visions I sing. The glorious, beauteous maidens I describe in my lyric numbers have no counterpart on this mundane planet."

"Say not so, O Poet," droned a Genie, who appeared, conveniently enough, from nowhere; "I will send thee, as thou wishest, a mortal, who shall be, in very truth, the realization of all the rare and radiant maidens whom thou hast sung in thy liltings, and whom the angels would be justified in naming 'Lenore'."

"Where is she?" gasped the Poet, "where is my glorious Goddess, with a voice like a chime of tinkling silver bells?"

"Here,—am,—I,—come—," and a maiden appeared. Her voice was exactly like a chime of silver bells, and the metallic ring sounded queer enough. She chimed the phrase three times (because it was quarter to five) with the varying notes of a clock's chime, and it nearly drove the Poet frantic. "I am, indeed, thy Goddess," went on the clinking metal tones, "dost thou not recognize the rose leaf hands, with which thou hast ever endowed me? and the alabaster arms?"

Well, if you can imagine the shock to the poor Poet! She held out long arms of cold, hard, carved alabaster, and at the end of each was a soft crumpled rose-petal instead of a hand!

## THE POET'S LOVE

"Why dost thou shudder?" she said disappointedly; "'tis but the realization of thine own poesy. Stay, see my feet."

She thrust her tiny feet in and out from beneath her petticoat frills, and if you please, they were like mice! Pointed noses and black beady eyes gave the Poet a positive turn, but what could he do? Had he not himself vowed the similitude?

In despair he turned his eyes to her face. She fixed him with a glance of her starry eyes. Starry, indeed. They were of the five-pointed shape, and gleamed with a yellow light. Coyly, she dropped over them a jetty fringe,—the sort mother used to wear on her basque. "You said," she chimed, "by those lids whose jetty fringe kisses thy soft cheek's blooming tinge." Ay, he had said it; and now she laid her blooming cheek against his own. He had said her cheeks were peach-like,—and they were. The fuzzy skin of the peach felt like velvet rubbed the wrong way,—a thing he never could stand!

Her swan-like neck was covered with tiny soft white feathers; and when she smiled, he saw two strings of pearl beads, like a double necklace. Her hair, of spun gold, scratched his face fearfully, but the climax came when she pressed her lips to his. For, her lips, as he had avowed a hundred times, were of coral! That bunchy sort of coral, you understand, that they make babies' necklaces of.

With a mad shriek, the Poet flung her from him, and devoted the rest of his life to the writing of Realistic Prose.

## MONOLOGUE BY A MODERN MOTHER

**N**OW it's time for you to start for school, Reggie, darling. Good-by. No, don't kiss me! How many times must I tell you that kissing is unsanitary?

"Oh, child, how could you pat the dog! Now we must sterilize your hands all over again and steam them and then use the antiseptic spray on them. There! Now, here are your antiseptic gloves. Get your hands into them quickly.

"And here's your individual car strap. Be careful not to touch any other.

"And here are two tubes of germicide and a vaporizer; gargle every even hour from this bottle, and sniff this one every odd hour.

"Here's your doctor's certificate in its antiseptic case. Show it to the teacher if he insists on cutting out your tonsils again, and tell him I'm sure your adenoids have not grown again since your operation last week.

"Now run along, dearie. Don't breathe when the wind is blowing or any dust flying or any people passing. Don't breathe at all if you can help it."

## THE FATAL DOWER

**A**BOVE the cradle of a new-born girl-child the gift fairies were hovering. One dowered the sleeping infant with happiness. One gave her health; one gave her wealth; and one a kind heart; one gave her a sense of humor. And then the Queen of the Fairies dowered the child with beauty.

But after that came creeping toward them an evil fairy.

The good fairies wept, but none had power to stay the hand of the wicked one. "But this I can do," cried the Queen. "Dower her you may, but I decree that your gift shall be but the repetition of one already bestowed."

"Even so, and yet shall I dower her with a curse," said the evil fairy chuckling; "I bestow upon this child more beauty."

She waved her wand, and the child was twice as beautiful as she had been before. Well pleased with the effect of her fatal gift, the wicked fairy flew away and the child's doom was sealed.

## THE THIRD PAUPER

**Y**OU must be married," said the King.  
"I'll be hanged if I will!" said the Princess.

"You'll be hanged if you don't!" said the King.

"Then," said the Princess, the pretty Princess, the Princess with the white, white, teeth, "to spite you I'll marry the poorest man in the world."

"Done!" said the King. "Let the heralds proclaim it, and the suitors shall meet here this day week."

In a week the palace hall was full of suitors. In the elimination trials all were weeded out but three. These the Princess inspected carefully.

The first of the three preferred his charges: "I love you so much that I would share my last dollar with you," he said.

"Discard that knave," the Princess cried, "if he has a dollar he's too rich for me."

The King smiled.

The second spoke: "I love you so much that I'd share my last crust with you."

"Two out!" laughed the Princess. "If you have crusts to eat you're not poor enough for me. Next!"

The King laughed.

"I love you so much," said the third, "that I'd share my last name with you."

"Engaged," said the Princess, the pretty Princess, the Princess with the white, white teeth.



## CRUELTY IN THE KITCHEN

**I**N THESE days of hunting up crying wrongs and bringing them to public notice, in an article which (in the prospectus) grips the reader's attention, we feel privileged to call attention to some cruelty in the household that, even when known, is condoned by members of our first families.

Discipline is all very well, and in rare cases castigation is permissible; but we ask of you, gentle matrons, tender-hearted mothers of children, do you think it right to allow an ignorant, uneducated servant girl to whip the cream? To be sure, if the cream is bad, that is another matter; but how often good cream gets a whipping without deserving it! And, too, afterward, the poor cream (or rich, as the case may be) is shut up in a dark closet, there to stay for several hours. These things ought not to be, and yet an investigation of the average kitchen would show an even worse state of affairs.

I have known these uncurbed servant girls to beat eggs! Simple, good little eggs, who never were bad in their lives! And yet bad eggs never are beaten! Thus we see the injustices of a cold world.

A still more barbarous practice is that of stoning raisins—sweet-natured, soft little roly-poly raisins! They never did anybody any harm (unless he ate too many of them), and they have no means of retaliation. It is a nature of inborn cruelty that would stone an inoffensive raisin.

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But such natures there be. Such a one would even pound almonds! In a fair fight pounding is one thing, but deliberately to pound an almond, just because you are bigger than he is, is the essence of meanness!

To cut bread is another unnecessary cruelty. An accidental cut on one's own finger is hastily bound up and the poor patient showered with kindly sympathy; but gash after gash is given to a loaf of bread, without so much as an offer of a clean linen rag or a bottle of antiseptic solution!

But enough has been said to turn the attention of the public to these atrocities. It is for the public to take up the matter and insist upon having in their kitchens the same loving and humane spirit that obtains in their drawing-room.

## CHOOSING CHOUX

**Y**ES," said Gladys Gwendolyn to her friend, as they parted at the corner of the Avenue, "your new suit is lovely, dear, and screamingly becoming. But it would improve the effect if you'd get one of those soft bunches of malines, a chou, you know, and wear it at the back of your neck."

"I believe you're right," agreed Ermyntrude; "I'll go right in to Moneymaker's and get one now."

The two girls parted, and Ermyntrude entered the big department store.

"Where shall I find choux?" she asked of an affable floorwalker.

"Third floor, madam; take the elevator."

On the third floor Ermyntrude again asked directions:

"Where are the choux, please?"

"Ties?"

"Why, yes—sort of ties. I suppose. But they're called choux. I want black ones."

"Shoe department, three aisles to the left."

"Oh, I don't mean that kind."

"All kinds are there."

"But I don't mean shoes at all. I mean choux. I want black ones and white ones both."

"You will find all colors in the shoe department."

"I don't want shoes at all! I want choux, lace ones, you know."

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"The lace shoes and button shoes are both there, madam."

"Oh, you don't understand me! I want white lace choux, ties, you know, and black ones and tan-colored and light blue."

"You'll find the blue among the evening wear; the others are all in the regular shoe department."

"Oh, have you a regular chou department? I didn't suppose there was such a demand for them. Now, I only want one of each color."

"We don't sell them singly, madam."

"Oh, it's the wholesale department, then. Well, where do you retail choux?"

"It is the retail department, but we sell them only in pairs."

"You don't understand me yet! I want choux! Choux, not shoes! Just one chou, to wear at the back of my neck."

The floorwalker understood at last. The poor young thing was crazy! It was pathetic, but she must be removed from the store immediately and without creating a commotion.

"Yes," he said soothingly—"yes, you shall have a shoe to wear at the back of your neck, and a mitten to wear on your left ear, and a cake of soap for a breast-pin."

He had always heard that one must humor the vagaries of a lunatic, and he felt proud of his achievement when he saw the irate and indignant young woman start hastily toward the elevator, little dreaming she was on her way to report him at the office.

## THE SCIENCE OF SOLISTRY

THE art of palmistry is familiar to all, but the science of solistry, though less well known, is interesting in the extreme.

As long ago as in the Age of Sages the remark was made, "Know Thyself," and it is to the school of Solon we are indebted for the understanding of our Solar System.

The Immortality of the Sole is a theory advanced by Platoe, but his arguments have been contradicted by many later footmen.

Locke, in his treatise *On the Human Understanding*, discusses the subject fully and with many footnotes, and Samuel Foote himself cast footlights on the subject.

The palmist may claim to read the true character from the lines of the hand, but it is only by solistry that the real sole is laid bare and the character of those subjects in any walk of life is exposed.

A short study of the accompanying directions will enable anyone to master the subject, and the way-faring man, though a fool, need not err therein.

For our purposes we will consider the foot divided into three parts: the separate movable part called the toes, the middle part called the sole, and the anterior portion, or heel. It should be remarked that the sole is greater than any of its parts.

If the sole, measured from the roots of the toes to the heel, is longer than the middle toe, the sub-

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ject is exceedingly well balanced and is an easy-going, whole-souled kind of person. If, on the other foot, the middle toe is longer than the sole the subject is ill balanced and unsteady in his habits.

A narrow sole indicates a small mind full of prejudice, and with a tendency to commit solecisms. A broad sole denotes a large and generous temperament and a friendly footing toward all, without danger of misunderstandings.

Indeed, a thorough, broad understanding of humanity is the foundation of all wisdom and consequently the base of existence.

The small mounds or foothills found at the base of the toes are designated by solists thus: the mound at the base of the great toe, which is called the light fantastic toe, because it is found near the ball of the foot, is named in honor of Terpsichore. This mount is found highly developed in a professional danseuse, though she is often known to put her whole sole into her dancing.

The mount at the base of the second toe is called the mount of Trilby. This is seen in its fullest development among those who in their efforts to get back to nature have formed the habit of going bare-foot.

The mount at the base of the third toe is the mount of Atalanta; this of course is most developed in all runners, whether running for office or merely for pleasure.

The next mount is that of Cinderella, and the fifth, the mount of Mercury. It is supposed that as flying machines become of more common use the mount of Mercury will be found greatly developed on the feet of the aëronauts.



## THE SCIENCE OF SOLISTRY

The lines of the sole are greatly indicative of character. All traits of character must draw the line somewhere.

A line extending from the mount of Trilby to the outer side of the sole is the life line. If this line appears to be broken it indicates future death. If more pronounced on one sole than the other, it implies that the subject has one foot in the grave.

The heart line should run from the mount of Atalanta straight to the ball of the foot. This indicates luck at cards; it is therefore called the Cardiac line. The line indirectly below this is the head line. A broken headline indicates pugnacity, but a continuous line denotes a long and level head.

The line from the mount of Cinderella running toward the heel is the clothes line and shows great love of dress. The line that crosses this is the fish line, and often shows that the subject is incapable of telling the truth.

As Sherlock Holmes deduced much from footprints, so the occupation of the subject can often be determined from the lines of the foot. Thus, the line of battle and the line of march are hard lines, often calloused, proving the soldier or the tramp. In the case of a footpad these lines are not calloused. A line-meeting indicates a railroad man. A tow-line, a sailor. Solar spots, an astronomer. A well-developed foot-ball, a college student.

In the poetic foot the lines are strongly marked. There are many short lines, called Alexandrines, but the two types of poetic feet oftenest seen are the Iambic and the Trochaic. In poetic feet the heels are often in French forms. But the sole of a poet is often found on lame and halting feet, of which a

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noted example is found in Lord Byron. Again, among poets, the right and left feet sometimes vary. Browning tells us that every man "boasts two sole sides." Logically this would seem to preclude a poet from having sole mates, but poets are a foot-loose class and privileged to poetic license.

The club foot has long been prevalent among men about town, but since the invention of women's clubs this deformity is found in both sexes. The foot of a timid man often shows no lines at all, for the reason that he cannot call his sole his own.

The mount Achilles is situated in the heel, and is found in its greatest development among doctors and certain politicians.

We will conclude this article by a quotation from the great pedant, Omar Kháyyám, and he who runs may read:

"Why, if the Sole could fling the Dust aside,  
And naked to the Air of Heaven Ride,  
Were't not a Shame, were't not a Shame for him  
In Patent Leather tamely to Abide!"

## ON CRACKING CHERRY-STONES

**I**N THIS wicked and ungodly world there are few more harmless and yet absorbing pleasures than cracking cherry-stones upon the sidewalk.

It is a pleasure, however, only to the initiate—nay, more, only to the analytical and introspective, for a thoughtful, reflective temperament is necessary to acquire proficiency.

Your born devotee of the art will never crack a cherry-stone on a wooden pavement; asphalt may do, but flagging is best.

Then the touch. Although intuitive, and not to be acquired, yet it may be cultivated and improved by study and practice. Only the tyro will throw out a tentative foot, hit or miss, blindly groping for a stone six inches out of his course. The skilled cracker will sight the stone twenty feet away, and gradually, almost unconsciously, will shape his course and direct his steps so that he cannot avoid stepping on it, striking it with the exact spot of his sole best calculated to do the deed.

Not the toe, where a forward push is necessary and which makes it a sliding crush; nor too far back, which misses it; and, the saints forbend!—not with the heel, but a firm, clear pressure with the ball of the foot, resulting in a sharp, short cr-r-rk! so delicious to the trained ear. Proper shoes, too, must be worn; not paper-soled nor too thick, but a shoe with a firm, flexible sole not yet worn slippery.

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Of course cracking is more fun when one is alone, for a companion, unless absolutely in sympathy, may object to the deviations from a straight course made necessary by the location of the stones. And, too, the companion may step on the very stone we have had our eye on for half a block.

To go slowly with downcast eyes, thinking of the subject nearest our heart, half-hearing the birds, half-seeing the flowers blooming all about, half-feeling the soft breeze, but wholly conscious of a gleaming white cherry-stone ahead of us, gives us an eager anticipation, the delight of which is only equaled by the satisfaction of stepping squarely on the stone and hearing its sharp, clear crack.

Why this is a pleasure is as impossible to tell as why we like caviare or Brieux. It may not be explained or even adequately described, but the mere mention of it is at once recognizable to those who have ever experienced it.

There are not many who know this subtle pleasure in all its fullness; there are even some to whom it is a sealed book; but the cognoscenti have already felt the first pleasurable thrills of a season which is all too brief.

## THE YEARS THAT THE LOCUST HATH EATEN

**T**O BE sure, the locust, in his voracity, has been omnivorous, and hath eaten many good and great things, and likewise many noxious things that we are glad to be well rid of.

But while devouring his years, he has shown some discrimination, and has refrained from swallowing some monuments of art and architecture, which still stand a noble tribute to locustian taste.

But let us give him his just meed of praise for his indefatigable nibbling in our parlors a few decades ago. Ah, the nimble fingers of the housemother and her young lady daughters flew fast, but the open-mouthed locust followed fast and followed faster, and in due time their handicraft became the locust's commissariat. Creeping through the darkened parlor, with what gusto he ate up the worsted-worked motto, ay, even its black-walnut rustic frame!

He must have had a surfeit, for the shaded zephyr sentiments proclaimed from every kalsomined wall that there was No Place Like Home, and that The Lord would Provide. A lighter diet came to the locust with the air-castles, made of bristles culled from the lowly pig, and adorned, like the Toeless Pobble, with minute scraps of scarlet flannel. These marvels were swung from the folding-door frame, and attracted admiration from callers and flies of artistic taste.

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Other air-castles soon replaced them, aërial wonders of Bristol-board cubes, dangling in complicated multiplicity from chenille loops.

Then the throws! Airy scarfs, these, made of China silk and bolting-cloth, like as not, hand-painted; edged with frail and twisty silk tassels, and apparently carelessly tossed over the corner of a white-framed etching or a marble mantelpiece. If the latter, they were held in place by one of the two plumed and swash-buckling bronze gentlemen who guarded the ends of the mantel. Well, the locust ate these up, and then tackled the felt tidies and lambrequins decked with crewel-worked cattails and sunflowers. Usually these delicacies were adorned with ribbons of old gold or olive, invariably combined with light blue. Ah, the locust then had his fill of esthetic color!

Next must he engage upon a myriad milking-stools that suddenly sprang into being, like toad-stools after rain. They were gilded, hand-painted with flowers, and bebowed with broad satin ribbon. With these he relished home-made tambourines of painted satin; and rich plush banners flung upon the inner walls, showing floral designs of which the medium used was narrow ribbon threaded into a needle; here, too, he choked down macramé lace brackets and darned lace tidies. Pausing to eat a sudden shower of rick-rack, which descended like manna, he attacked heavier food.

He forced himself to a diet of Rogers's groups; he avidly ate up the stereoscopes, and the bounteous harvest of wax fruit and flowers. Nor did he omit a large corner bracket made of leather grapes and leaves, thickly powdered with dust. Then fol-



## THE YEARS THAT THE LOCUST HATH EATEN

lowed the fruit-pieces and game-pieces from the dining-room walls, and the crayon portraits on ebonized easels.

Getting a taste for pictures, he consumed "Wide-Awakes" and "Fast Asleeps" in enormous quantities, also "Rocks of Ages," "Alone at Lasts," and "Wait for Mes." But supplies poured in, and he must needs swallow tile-pipe umbrella stands, stamp-plates, statuettes of "The Diver," hammered-brass plaques in plush frames and tables made of onyx, of felt-covered wooden-washstands, or of a cheese-box cover and three broomsticks, which the Midas of fashion had turned to gold.

Then came a flashing swirl of umbrella silk lampshades, like the ruffled skirts of a chorus-girl, followed by a whirlwind of tissue paper ones, similarly made, at less cost.

And is the poor locust now allowed to diet a little? Nay, not so; but far otherwise. Having eaten up ping-pong and picture puzzles, having finished the hand-painted china and art pottery, the limp, suède-covered books and iridescent glass vases, he stowed away the burned wood and burned leather, and then turned to crape paper. He is now nibbling at old brass and copper jorums, and other Twenty-second Street excavations, and is about to turn to a feast of cretonne inutilities and cross-stitch embroidery. Incidentally, while thus ridding our parlor of dire and devastating influences, the friendly locust hath likewise rid us of the parlor!

He has left us the living-room, the library, the music-room, but we acknowledge gratefully that the parlor, with its repelling sanctuary atmosphere, belongs to the years that the locust hath eaten.

## A LOVERS' QUARREL

**O**H, KITTY, you are so sweet, and I do love you so. Tell me you love me, dearie."

"I do love you Dick; why, I never supposed I could love anybody so much."

"Oh, little girl, I only wish you loved me half as much as I love you."

"Half as much! Why, dear, I love you more than you love me—a great deal more"—

"Now, don't be silly, pet. It would be impossible for you to love me as much as I love you. Of course, I love you best."

"Of course you don't! You love me, I know, but not as much as I love you."

"Now, Kitty, be reasonable."

"I will if you'll admit that I do love you best."

"How can I admit what isn't true?"

"Well, you might say it was so just to please me."

"Oh, no, dear, I can't do that."

"Because you don't love me enough!"

"Oh, the idea!"

"If you did love me best you'd say anything I asked you to, whether it was true or not."

"Would you do that?"

"Of course I would."

"All right, then you admit that I love you best, because I ask you to do so!"

"Oh, Dick, how horrid you are! How can you be so cruel to me?"

## A LOVERS' QUARREL

"There, there, don't cry. I'll admit that you love me best, but I only admit it because you ask me to."

"Then that's all right."

"But, don't you see, Kitty, when I say that because you ask me to, and you won't say it when I ask you to, that proves I love you best after all."

"There you go again! I do think you're too mean for anything!"

"Well, never mind, sweetheart, let's kiss and be friends. You do love me best I'm sure."

"Oh, no, I don't, Dick. Oh, you are so sweet. You love me best, darling."

"Oh, no I don't, love. You love me best!"

"No, my Dick, you love me best——"

## CITY TIPS, OR A GUIDE TO GOTHAM

**A**UTOMOBILE.—A machine used by the classes for the overthrow and crushing out of the masses. An efficacious instrument of race homicide.

Automatic Slot Machines.—A modern invention to facilitate the speedy parting of a fool and his money.

Broadway.—So-called because it is the narrowest street in the city. It is bounded on the south by the Flatiron Building and on the north by the Hotel Astor. The Broadwayward inhabitants are skilled in the painless extraction of visitors' funds, in which proceeding they are adept and expeditious. (See suburban timetables.)

Boss.—(See Intelligence Office.)

Children.—Obsolete term.

Coffee Exchange.—A Diet Dispensary, where the injurious and death-dealing coffee-berry may be exchanged for a wholesome package of Browned Beans, or Ground Bread Crumbs.

Coal and Iron Exchange.—A most convenient institution for those who wish to exchange their coal for iron, or vice versa.

Cathedral of St. John.—A noble example of architecture. As yet only the first syllable has been erected.

Cheap Skates.—(See Five and Ten Cent Store.)

## CITY TIPS, OR A GUIDE TO GOTHAM

Coney Island.—Indescribable. (See Coney Island.)

Diana.—A celebrated statue representing the acme of high art.

Fine Arts.—New York City is well up in fine arts. Many lady artists have studios of their own, where they hand-paint pictures and keep a gas stove. There are also shops where one may buy lovely burnt-leather things, and hand-painted calendars.

Fishing.—Take N. Y. C. & H. R. R. to the Adirondacks. Here fine trout fishing can be had (i. e., may be had, or should be had). Or, take the Cross Country Limited to San Francisco, and then to Portland, Ore., for splendid salmon fishing. Or Southern Railroad to Florida for tarpon and alligators.

Fishing Clubs.—(See Ananias.)

The Hippodrome.—This word is derived from the Greek hippo, a horse, and drome, past participle of dream; therefore, a horse dream (if nightmare). A description of this institution is impossible, as the largest adjectives in the English language are not as large as the Hippodrome. (See the show.)

House of Detention.—The exchange desk of a department store.

Hot Air Fund.—An appropriation for defraying the expenses of campaign committees.

Hospital.—(See appendix.)

Library.—A background for a pair of marble heraldic animals, and a pair of flagpoles.

Long Island.—A sound proposition.

Long Branch.—(Forget it.)

Oyster Cocktail.—A combination of hot and peppery ingredients, resulting in biting sauce.

Oyster Bay.—(Ditto.)

## PLEASING PROSE

Places of Interest.—Savings banks.

Peach Crop.—(See a comic opera.)

Roof Gardens.—Gardens where they raise the roof.

Stuffed Club.—The Millionaires' Club.

School for Designing Young Women.—An institution for the instruction of young women in all kinds of designing. (An unnecessary industry.)

Sanitary Drinking Fountains.—A necessary evil.

Suffragettes.—An unnecessary evil.

Theatres.—(See all the attractions.)

Intermissions.—(See a man.)

Turkish Baths.—These are given free in the Subway trains and in the Grand Central Tunnel.

Tubes.—Contrivances for the transportation of Rubes to and from the city.

Tenderloin.—A tough district.

Union Market.—(See Matrimonial Bureau.)

Woman's Exchange.—(See Divorce Court.)

Wall Street.—The abode of the Brokers and the Broke.



## MENDACITY AS A FINE ART

**I**T IS a curious and interesting study as one grows older to look back upon the time-honored lies of one's childhood, and remember the calm air of verity with which they were told and believed.

They say that the kindergarten movement is striving to change all this; but, though the result may be a wiser and better platform of child instruction, one cannot help feeling a thrill at the iconoclasm which shatters the classic falsehoods of our nursery days.

Who does not remember glorious visions of curling hair that was to be the inevitable consequence of eating crusts? In no other way would the consumption of those hard and unpalatable morsels have been anything but the veriest torture; but with a positive assurance of the ensuing crop of golden curls that would replace the straight tow locks, the crusts were as delectable as honey from Olympus.

Another thrilling announcement was that soap would make our eyes bright. With a valor and bravery surpassing that of the historic Spartan boy, we have grimly endured most fearful ocular smartings at our toilet, upheld by the thought of the brilliant and sparkling orbs that should eventually be ours. How should we know that the primal cause of this, to us, natural law was simply a subterfuge to justify the careless performance of the maternal bathing hand?

## PLEASING PROSE

Often when an extra complement of guests caused a dearth of chairs we stood until our weary legs ached; yet valiantly, forsooth, for more upholding than any crutch was the authoritative knowledge that a standing posture was greatly conducive to growth. Noble visions of tall, broad specimens of the human form divine danced before our blinking eyes, and made standing a joy and delight.

Then the valuable information that the sweetest meat was nearest the bone, and that the best part of the apple grew next to the core! Such conviction was carried by these often repeated statements that our childish mind recognized at once the superior flavor of the portions in question, and eagerly despatched the less desirable parts that we might sooner reach the delicious tidbit. No base suspicion sullied the clear crystal of our confiding infantile minds that we were the victims of the basest bribery and corruption. Little did we guess that it was merely a ruse on the part of our thrifty and economical parents to insure our utilization of all that was edible in our food!

More glitteringly specious, and therefore a more heinous crime to look back upon, was the promise that he who ate the most porridge should have the most pudding. The child mind, though logical, is not often capable of detecting a fallacy, and the fact that this sliding scale of operation would work automatically against our own interests never occurred to us until too late.

Although reprehensible, the old-fashioned lies, it must be admitted, were as a rule efficacious.

Probably ninety-nine portraits out of a hundred taken of children in lately-past generations show a

## MENDACITY AS A FINE ART

photographic reproduction of confident anticipation of seeing a little bird fly out. Without that fabulous little bird many of those pictures could never have been taken, and as they have reasons for being, quite apart from their artistic value, it may be that our mendacious parents were justified in doing evil that good might come.

## THE EASTER PARADE

**T**HE days of the Easter Parade are numbered. This sapient remark has been made annually for many years, but it meant nothing.

Wise ones said, "Oh, women don't don new hats on Easter Sunday nowadays, as they used to," and then the shops full of beflowered confections would be transferred to feminine heads, and they'd make an initial appearance on Easter Sunday as always.

Wise ones also said, "The Easter crowd on Fifth Avenue is nothing to what it used to be!" and then, if the sun shines on Easter Sunday, the grand old street is packed as ever with a millineried multitude.

But aside and apart from these considerations, the days of the Easter Parade are numbered, because the occasion is soon to be supplemented by another Parade Day.

As soon as the suffragists have completed a few unfinished details, the franchise will come to women, and then—who doubts it?—Election Day will be Parade Day!

It is a foregone conclusion that Election Day will be changed from November to some spring date (not inappropriately, April first).

Then Easter hats and Easter costumes will be a forgotten issue, and a whole year's energies and planning will result in Election hats and Election

## THE EASTER PARADE

gowns. Wide scope will be allowed. For those who prefer it, stunning morning costumes and smart tailored hats will be de rigueur for voting before noon.

Afternoon balloting will give occasion for a grand display of rich apparel that shall sow seeds of envy, hatred and malice in all feminine hearts. And the evening! But who can picture the glories of Election night after women can vote?

No closing of the polls at six o'clock then! Women know the effect of evening costumes, and instead of the horrid horn-tooting, feather-tickling crowds that now make Election night hideous, there will be streets full of people remindful of the audience that emerges after a special opera performance.

The polling booths will vie in comfort and luxury with the new ocean liners. Probably the booths will be built entirely of glass, so that no detail of the voter's costume may be lost upon the waiting ones outside.

The ballots will be deckel-edged, hand-painted affairs, and exclusive women will doubtless have individual or personal ballots, as they have Christmas cards nowadays. Or, if a woman choose, she can have her ballot designed to match her costume.

Voting parties will be a popular form of entertainment, when, after a delightful luncheon or dinner, the guests will be taken in decorated motor cars to the polls.

Ah, yes, the coming glories of Election Day will obliterate even the memory of our so-called Easter Parade. And doubtless the women's Committee of Arrangements will decide to have the date fall upon

## PLEASING PROSE

the first pleasant Tuesday after the first clear Monday in May, which will eliminate the awful uncertainty of weather that always hangs about Easter Sunday.



## THE AGE OF COMMON SENSE

**WE** ARE told that, whether the trend of modern usage be toward making the world better or worse, it's at least in the direction of common sense. By way of subscribing to this theory, we wish to call attention to the grand display of common sense shown in the choice of human garb. A man wears a costume of thick, unwieldy material, which is ugly to the sight, ugly to the touch, and whose rough, woolly surface forms a permanent trap for dust, dirt, and microbes. His ridiculous shirt bosom, far more unyielding than a coat of mail, keeps him in terror lest he break or soil it. Round his neck and wrists he wears contraptions of the same degree of comfort as a convict's handcuffs and equally hampering. Round his collar is tied a bit of foolish-colored silk, with spots or stripes, absurdly out of harmony with the rest of his get-up. His hat is the most uncomfortable piece of mechanism that can be devised, and constricts his forehead into red furrows—or else blows off.

A woman, after a foundation rigging of unbelievable discomfort, dons a garb of salt-sack proportions, but with tight collar, tight sleeves, tight bodice, and tight skirt. She wears tight shoes, with stilt-like heels, tight gloves, and a tightly drawn veil. Her coiffure takes on an added discomfort with each new style, and her hatpins, when in use, are instru-

## PLEASING PROSE

ments of torture. As to her hat—but no feminine hat, whatever may or may not be its absurdity, can get as far from common sense as a man's top hat or derby.

A woman, with necessity for carrying handkerchiefs, gloves, powder puffs, samples, recipes, memoranda, fans, glove buttoners, visiting cards, and a thousand and one such things, has no pockets. A man, with nothing to carry but a jackknife and a roll of bills, has seventeen. A woman, with a hat brim twelve inches wide, carries a parasol; a man, with a hat brim an inch wide, carries none. A woman, who uses her handkerchief for every conceivable purpose, from dusting off the hall table to washing baby's face, has a cobwebby trifle, eight inches square. A man, who uses his only for its declared purpose, has a square yard of good cambric.

A woman, though her head be well thatched with hair—and re-enforced at that—need not take off her hat when talking to a friend in the street. A man, with a few sparse spears or perhaps none, must do so and thereby risk pneumonia.

Every man desires to be of tall stature, yet never would he add a lift to his low boot heels. A woman, beloved often because petite, elevates herself on four-inch heels.

Yea, verily, it is the era of common sense, thus evinced by the rational garments on the human form divine!

## LITTLE-FINGER CROOKERS

**L**ITTLE-FINGER CROOKING is the outward and visible sign of an ostentatious soul.

The lines of a palm may be uncertain and misleading, but the crook of a little finger is a positive indication of the nature of its owner.

And, first, it denotes deceitfulness. The crooked little finger is more often seen on women than men, and this is because a larger proportion of the fair sex have deceitful natures.

The woman, then, who raises her teacup with what she believes to be an elegant curve of her little finger is trying to impress those who see her with the idea that hers is a refined and cultured nature. But the deceit is proved by the fact that this same woman seldom crooks her little finger in the privacy of her own room. This, therefore, proves that the crooking is not the natural result of refinement and culture, but a specious and flimsy pretense. Why it is accepted among those of the cult as a sign of good birth and breeding is a mystery indeed; for it has never yet been observed among the truly aristocratic. But it is so accepted, and it stands for veneering of all sorts.

If a woman is not quite sure of her position, her gown or her pronunciation, she crooks her little finger as she raises her bediamonded lorgnette, and fondly fancies all her shortcomings are overlooked.

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As a rule, the little-finger crookers are of those who sadly abuse the word "artistic." To them, anything bizarre or esthetic is "artistic." A burnt-leather photograph frame, a draped fishnet or a Bagdad burlap is enthusiastically dubbed with the poor overworked adjective.

And then, with a smile of superiority, they curve their little fingers and sip tea with the air of a connoisseur.

Deep and careful research has failed to discover the origin of the crooking habit. The only possible presumption is that it is a relic of barbarism, and that there was a time when only the great had cups to drink from. These few, to protect themselves from their envious and covetous brethren, stuck out their little fingers to ward off possible assaults upon their porcelain property.

Be that as it may, the crooking of the modern little finger apparently stands for a buffer against the assaults upon a fragile and easily demolished refinement.

## A TONGUE TWISTER

**Y**ES, I'll tell you all about it, John, dear. You see, I was in such haste, and I just flew through the gate and flung my ticket to the tocket chipper——."

"There, there! Don't talk so fast, little woman; you mean the chicket topper."

"Ha, ha! You're as bad as I am! Of course I mean the chocket tipper."

"Well, what's the matter with you? Go on, you flung your ticket to the toppet chicker."

"The chippet tocker——"

"The tippet chocker——"

"The choppet ticker——"

"Oh, the dickens! Next time do take a surface car!"

## EVE'S TUTORS

**N**OW, in her younger days, Eve was quite content to be Adam's Little Know-Nothing. She was the same sort of child-wife as Dora Copperfield, only she didn't call her husband Doady.

Adam, being a man, well liked her to be that way, and loved her for her docile, trusting, adoring nature. He didn't want a Cultured Highbrow or a Suffragette for his mate; he wanted the gentle, ignorant little girl that was bestowed upon him.

And Eve loved Adam most exceedingly; she deferred to him always, with a pleasant meekness, and desired greatly to learn knowledge of him. But, of a truth, Adam was all unable to teach her many of the traits she wished to acquire; and much lore that she could have welcomed, he was at a loss or unwilling to impart to her.

So Eve wandered about the Garden of Eden and pondered right mournfully on the vastness of her ignorance and her woeful lack of worldly wisdom. And, as she strolled, there came and strutted by her side a great Peacock, dignified, yet flaunting of mien and vastly beautiful.

"How wonderful you are!" said Eve, admiringly; "I am not of such beauty."

"You are beautiful," returned the Peacock, "but you are ignorant."

"Too true," wailed Eve, in most sad accents.



## EVE'S TUTORS

"But I have no Tutors to tute me. How may I acquire worldly wisdom in this Garden?"

"There are many Tutors about, Oh, Eve!" replied the Peacock; "but you fail to recognize them as such. Many of the creatures in this Garden have traits and knowledge, which, learned by you, would be of inestimable value to you; and, so, to woman-kind forever."

Eve's eyes sparkled, and her countenance grew bright in anticipation of this coveted knowledge that might yet be hers.

"Explain, Oh, Peacock!" she begged of the beautiful bird.

"I, myself, will teach you vanity," he responded, and he proudly flaunted his gorgeous plumage before her eyes. "Vanity is one of the most useful studies in a woman's curriculum. Be vain and you will be happy. Be convinced of your own beauty and you have already convinced others of it. Be vain of your own accomplishments and you have already forced men to admire them, and women to be jealous of them. Vanity produces little arts and graces hitherto undreamed of; it makes you charming, alluring and altogether desirable."

The Peacock twisted his neck proudly, and the sun touched with gold the blue-green sheen.

"I am accounted beautiful, yes," he went on; "but mostly am I so accounted because I am vain of my beauty. Vanity brings haughtiness, scornful demeanor and supercilious ways, all of which are useful, even indispensable, to the worldly-wise woman."

Now, Eve was of a fine receptiveness, and the words of the Peacock fell on fertile soil. Vain she

## PLEASING PROSE

became at once. Proud of her own beauty, she twined her long tresses with wild flowers, and stuck poppies coquettishly over her ears. She chose the finest and best shaped fig leaves for her new apron, and bordered it with a fringe of bright blossoms.

Vanity became an ineradicable trait of her nature, and she besought Adam for extravagant expressions of admiration.

Adam, poor man, was a bit bewildered. He had never seen a vain woman before, and he didn't quite know how to treat one. He did his best to please her, and at last he exclaimed in baffled astonishment: "Why, you're as vain as a Peacock!"

Then was Eve full content, for what more may one ask than to equal one's teacher?

Next, turned she to the Tiger for enlightenment and wisdom.

"My child, you have much to learn," said the great beast, looking benevolently from 'neath shaggy brows at the beautiful woman.

"Vain you are, but other feminine traits should be yours. Learn, then, of me. Acquire my soft, velvet-padded caress, which yet conceals sharp claws. Acquire my purring, indolent manner, which only masks a most alert attention. Learn my stealthy, secret mode of approach, even while all prepared for a sudden, deadly spring. This is the spirit of the lore I would teach you."

Readily, Eve understood. Even the treachery of the Tiger's nature was imparted to her, and stored away in her waking brain for the use of the Eternal Feminine.

Then came a Lamb, gamboling.

## EVE'S TUTORS

"Oh, pshaw, Tiger!" called the Lamb, gaily; "you're teaching Eve too much of your deceitful nature. Look here, Madam Eve; Man admires in woman the meekness and playfulness of the Lamb. A merry gentleness and docility doth at times please him greatly."

"Teach me," said Eve, tranquilly. "All of these things I fain would learn, that I may use them at my discretion."

So, from the Lamb, learned Eve all gentleness and docility of manner which, of a truth, well became her.

Now, when that Eve exploited these newly acquired traits in her home, the house cat looked at her critically.

"Much hast thou learned, Oh, Eve!" she spake, oracularly; "but more yet can I teach thee."

So Eve learned from the cat.

She acquired an elusiveness that was most tantalizing. She learned to walk away when called, and to sidle up unexpectedly. She learned to select the best seat, and she learned thoroughly the vice of curiosity. She acquired slyness, secret vindictiveness, and other catty attributes, which she stored away in her brain against the time when there should be other women in the world.

And more yet learned Eve. Of the Donkey, she acquired a fine stubbornness (this she determined to use with great moderation, but with decided effect).

From the Hen she learned domestic science, and a certain very feminine quality known as hen-mindedness. From the Chameleon she discovered how to take color from her surroundings, which is a

## PLEASING PROSE

fine art. Even the Crocodile taught her a pretty trick.

"Eve," said he, "weeping is a great thing to understand. Not for a real sorrow—such tears need no teaching. But tears for a purpose are among a woman's best weapons, in the unequal fight she must wage against men. It's mighty handy to be able to shed tears at will."

Eve greatly thanked the kind Crocodile, and soon learned to perfection the art of letting her beautiful eyes fill with big tears, and then rolling them in pearly drops slowly down her pink cheeks.

Now, the Serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field. And when that the others, of their love, had taught Eve much, then glided to her the Serpent and finished her education. He imparted to her the secrets of his sinuous grace, his mysterious, insinuating charm, and his persuasive and fascinating allurements. So, Eve learned the wisdom of the Serpent, and now was she wise indeed. Of such a wisdom was she that she tempted Adam; and by the inheritance of her wisdom, the daughters of Eve have ever possessed Knowledge, Wisdom and Power all unparalleled by that of man.

## THE STRIKE OF THE OLD JOKES

THE Editor was blithely signing checks when he was interrupted by a knock at the door—not the timorous, faint-hearted knock of a would-be contributor, but an ominous, reverberating knock, full of power and dramatic effect.

"Come in," said the Editor, a little uncertainly, for he had never heard a knock like that before.

A horde of creatures burst into the room. They were angry and uproarious, and as they carried banners with threatening legends on them, any one could deduce at once that they were Strikers.

Also, which they were.

The leader of the band was the old Mother-in-Law Joke. Ragged and weary, the overworked old Joke leaned heavily on a staff as she spoke.

"We are here, Mr. Editor, to claim our rights. We are a band of overworked, underpaid Jokes, and we demand shorter hours and better wages!"

"Hear, hear!" "We do! We do!" cried all the other Strikers, and the Cook Joke and Tramp Joke waxed belligerent and shook their fists at the not unfrightened Editor.

"Me, too," piped up the Gentle Spring Joke. "I'm only on duty at one season of the year, but at that time I'm so overworked that I have nervous prostration the rest of the year."

"Just my case," sighed the Moving-Day Joke, and the Summer Girl Joke said:

## PLEASING PROSE

"I'm like that, too."

"And so," went on the Mother-in-Law Joke, "we've struck!"

"In other words," interrupted the Cook Joke, "we're givin' notice, an' we're goin' to lave!"

"Unless our demands are met," said the Young Bride Housekeeper Joke.

"And wh-what are your d-de-demands?" gasped the Editor, who foresaw a dreadful siege ahead of him.

"These are our demands," declared the Getting-Home-Late-from-the-Club Joke. "As one of the oldest, most overworked, and poorest paid of the Strikers, I will announce our demands. We want assurance that each of us shall not appear in print in the same periodical more than three times in each issue. We want an entire vacation of two weeks each year. We want to be paid for at the rates given for jokes on new subjects. And we want guaranty that we shall be read! Then, every seven years we each want a whole year's vacation, agreeing, however, that we shall not all take this year at the same time."

"A wh-whole year!" gasped the Editor.

"Yes," said the Sweet Girl Graduate Joke; "this rule obtains in our colleges, and shall not the facetious Deans and Professors fare as well as the Academic?"

"But," said the Editor, "any humorous paper would fail—would at once cease to exist,—if it were obliged to lose any or all of you for a whole year!"

"Be that as it may," said the Mother-in-Law Joke, "we have made up our minds. Accede to our re-



## THE STRIKE OF THE OLD JOKES

quests, or we cease work at once; and where are your humorous papers, then?"

The Editor thought deeply for a moment. He was a right-spirited man, and he could not bring himself tamely to submit to these unconscionable demands.

"No!" he thundered, banging his fist down upon his be-inked desk. "No! I will not submit! Do your worst! I defy you! I have Strike-Breakers at hand. We will run our papers without your help. Go!"

His majestic figure towered above the baffled and flabbergasted old Jokes. They had not expected this! Even the little old Dog and Sausage Joke yelped helplessly.

Then another door opened, and the Editor's aides came bounding in.

They were Modern Jokes—Motor Jokes, Aeroplane Jokes, Suffragette Jokes, Divorce Jokes, Women's Club Jokes, Slashed Skirt Jokes, Bridge Jokes—ah, surely these could hold their own against the old and decrepit Strikers.

They looked good; they were young, fresh and active. They could stand years of hard work, and their pay-rates were large at present.

Ah, there was the rub! At present!

As the Editor gazed at them, he knew they were a short-lived race. Already many of their number had died a natural death. Where was the Theatre Hat Joke? The Bicycle Joke? The Ping-Pong Joke? The North Pole Joke? The Picture-puzzle Joke? All dead! The Sheath Skirt Joke? Dead, too. And the Hobble-Skirt Joke was, so to speak, on its last legs! No, clearly, these modern Jokes

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hadn't the stability, the wearing qualities, of the kind our fathers used to make.

It would not do! No so-called humorous paper could live a day without these old stand-bys.

And so the Editor,—upright and honorable man though he was,—promised the old Jokes they should have all their demands granted, and more, too, if they would but remain, as always, the prop and stay, the bone and sinew, of our funny Funny Papers.

## AT THE ORATORIO

**J**ET EARDROPS—Oh, my, we're late, aren't we?  
I do hate to push past the people in the seats,  
they're so disagreeable! Where's the usher any-  
way?

Usher—Checks, please.

Sable Stole—Here they are—three in the second  
row. Oh! isn't that music fine!

Alto Voice—Oh, thou that tellest good tidings—

Angel Child—Muth-uh! where are you? I can't  
see the way.

Usher—This way. Kindly be silent, ladies.

Chorus—Oh, thou that tellest—

Jet Eardrops—Yes, we must pass! Beg pardon!  
oh, excuse me, there, Gwennie, sit down!

Angel Child—Muth-uh, I've dropped my muff,  
and—

Usher—Little girl, you must not talk!

Chorus—Oh, thou that tellest—

Angel Child—I can't get my hat off! It's pinned  
—ouch!

Lady in Row Behind—Hush-sh-sh!

Chorus—Unto us a son is born.

Angel Child—Oh, muth-uh! we've got that rec-  
ord! Haven't we?

Man in Row in Front—Hush-sh-sh!

Jet Eardrops—Haven't you a program? Usher!  
Usher!

## PLEASING PROSE

Usher—Madame, you must not talk! It annoys the whole audience!

Jet Eardrops—Well, we want programs—three.

Angel Child—Yes, one for me! One for me!

Lady in Row Behind—Hush, little girl, hush!

Sable Stole—Oh, what timbre! Fine!

Chorus—Wonderful—Counselor—

Sable Stole—Remind me, Gwennie, after the performance to go to Tiffany's. I want to exchange that silver syrup jug I got on Christmas for a—

Jet Eardrops—Oh, are you going to exchange that? Why, Aunt Maria sent it, and—

Sable Stole—I know she did, but,—oh, that's the Pastoral Symphony! Isn't it grand? Can't you just see the Shepherds sitting around—yes, if I change it—

Angel Child—Muth-uh! I've dropped my ring! (Gets down under the seat.)

Lady in Row Behind—Oh, what a commotion! Can't you keep that child still a minute?

Sable Stole (angrily)—I guess she can look for her ring! Have you found it, dear?

Angel Child (crying loudly)—No, Mummy! I can't find it, and it's my new Christmas ring that Uncle—

Chorus—How beautiful upon the mountains—

Angel Child (sobbing)—Uncle Benny gave it—

Man in Row Ahead—Hush! Sh! I say Usher, can't you—

Chorus—Why do the Nations so furiously rage—

Man in Row Ahead—I should think they would! Usher, can't you—

Angel Child—Oh, Muth-uh, I remember now! I

## AT THE ORATORIO

didn't wear my ring at all! I left it—Say, Muth-uh, why don't they have candy slot things on the backs of these seats? They do at the Hippodrome, and I want——

Chorus—Dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel——

Man in Row Ahead (savagely)—I'd like to dash something——

Jet Eardrops—Well, if you're going to change that syrup jug, I believe I'll change that butter dish she sent me——

Chorus—Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Sable Stole—Yes, do! It's a fright. I think——

Angel Child—I want some candy, I do— I do——

Chorus—Forever—and ever-r and ever-r and ever——

Jet Eardrops—Isn't that orchestration simply——

Usher—Ladies, unless you stop talking, I must——

Angel Child—I want an ice cream soda, Muth-uh. Can't we go out of here?

Chorus—The trumpet shall sound——

Sable Stole—Yes, let's go. The soloists aren't very good anyway. The coloratura work of that soprano is——

Jet Eardrops—I think so, too. Let's go down to Tiffany's before it gets dark. (They bustle out.)

Usher—Thank goodness——

Chorus—Hallelujah—Hallelujah.

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**A**CCIDENT—In case you are run over by an automobile or a trolley car, ask the nearest policeman to take you to a drug-store. Do not worry about the chauffeur or the motorman; they will look out for themselves.

Ambulance—In case you are run over by an ambulance, jump in.

Apartment Houses—Tenements in which flats conceal themselves under assumed names.

Art Galleries—(See Europe.)

Ashes—(See Street Cleaning Department, or telephone to them.)

Battery, The—A shady part of Manhattan Island. (See Assault and Battery.)

Beaver Street—One of the first streets laid out in the city. In 1650 it was called the Beaver Graft, but since then graft has been transferred further uptown.

Blackwell's Island—One of the city's waterside resorts to which New Yorkers frequently go for an outing. The residences on the Island are large and imposing, and the majority are handsomely built of granite, in a feudal style of architecture. The residents are people of strong character and conservative in their habits, though occasionally they let themselves go. Those whose achievements entitle

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them to a sojourn on the Island may receive free passes and transportation, and many are admitted on the strength of their convictions.

**Bowery, The**—As its name implies, this is a shady lane, in which green things appear and are welcomed with delight.

**Breweries**—There are eighty-nine breweries in New York City, and more are in process of construction. (See W. C. T. U.)

**Bridges**—New York has two kinds of bridge—the Brooklyn Bridge and Bridge Whist. Patrons of both experience moments of great suspense. The total expense of each is about the same.

**Broadway**—Broadway is divided into two parts, day and night. Except on cloudy or stormy days, one part is as bright and light as the other.

**Bronx Park**—A large farm in the outlying district to the north, where a Zoo is said to exist. By the time you have found it, it will be time to return home—unless you went the week before.

**Brooklyn**—The support for the other end of the Bridge.

**Concerts**—The name under which theatrical performances are given on Sunday.

**Consuls**—Officials whom it is proper to consult, if you are a foreigner. They will refer you to the Police, who will in turn refer you to the Charitable Societies, who will refer you to the Police, who will refer you to the Consuls, who will advise you to consult a lawyer.

**Cook's Tours**—(See Intelligence Offices.)

**Costumes**—(See Churches.)

**Daughters of the Revolution**—A society of the feminine descendants of Revolutionary patriots.



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Daughters of the American Revolution—An organization of Dames, who created a Revolution in the Society of the Daughters of the Revolution, and made a Declaration of Independence therefrom.

Department Stores—These are the urban development of the original country store. In them, everything may be bought and everybody sold. On certain days there are Bargain Sales. These occasions are greatly enjoyed by the ladies, as they offer all the delightful crush and jam of an afternoon tea, without any necessity for good manners.

Dog Fanciers—Persons with this peculiar partiality may patronize any of the hot frankfurter stands or pushcarts.

Eden Musée—A place of entertainment where there are exhibited wax figures made up to look unlike noted people of the day.

Elysian Fields—(Don't see Hoboken.)

Grant's Tomb—An impressive and oppressive looking mausoleum, in the form of a huge inkstand, where lie the remains of President Grant and Julia Dent Grant.

Harlem—A station at the other end of the Subway.

Hell Gate—(See Subway Entrance.)

Licenses—Special permits, which must be obtained before one can sell gunpowder or kerosene, found a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, or write poetry.

Manhattan Island—Twenty-two square miles of the Strenuous Life.

Perambulators—(See Seeing Brooklyn.)

Society of the Cincinnati—Composed of descend-

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ants of commissioned officers of the American Army in the War of the Revolution.

**Sons of the Revolution**—Composed of descendants of soldiers of the American Army in the War of the Revolution, who were snubbed by the Society of the Cincinnati.

**Sons of the American Revolution**—Composed of descendants of the soldiers of the American Army of the War of the Revolution, who were snubbed by the Sons of the Revolution.

**Stock Exchange**—This building is so constructed that it is largely made up of corners, but a seat on the floor of the house may be had for eighty thousand dollars. Although not advertised as a zoo, its inmates are bulls, bears and lambs, all of whom are endeavoring to keep the wolf from the door. (cf. *Wild Animals I Have Known*.)

**Weather Bureau**—This organization doesn't know its own mind from one minute to another. When it wants certain kinds of weather, it hangs out various little flags as signals, but before the weather signaled for has a chance to come, the Bureau whips in those flags and puts out others. It is owing to this indecision of character that the Weather Bureau is unable to predict certainly the weather for any given day, and shelters itself behind such terms as "possibly partly cloudy," "winds mostly variable," and "perhaps partially foggy." The Bureau is located on the roof of one of the loftiest skyscrapers of New York, and is a most interesting place to see. (No visitors allowed.)

## MASCULINE AUTHORS AS MODISTES

**I**N MOST books of "Advice to Young Authors," one of the first and best advisory remarks is to "write only about what you know." It might be well for many of our men novelists to heed this caution, and be less minute in their descriptions of woman's dress.

As a rule, our realists are careful in this direction and deal only with unimpeachable generalities; as in Howells, we read of "an æsthetic dress of creamy white" or "she dressed simply in dark blue"; while "a brown silk of subdued splendor" is perhaps as near a detailed fashion note as that astute gentleman ever gets.

Frank R. Stockton was another conservative. His delightful young ladies are usually attired in "a robe of soft white flannel," "a blue-spotted calico," or a "fashionable driving costume, edged with fur," although once we find a beautiful heroine "arrayed in flowing folds of soft white cashmere, lace, and silk, a narrow velvet ribbon round her neck from which hung a sparkling jewel, and bands of gold about her round white wrists."

Kipling, with even greater caniness, contents himself with such comprehensive adjectives as "ball-room-frocked" or "gray-ulstered and black-velvet-hatted." And these are the ways of the wise.

Others there be, however, who insist on describ-

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ing the costumes of their heroines not wisely, but too well, and achieve thereby some startling mental pictures.

Mr. Nordau tells us of a lady who wore "a two-toned silk, dove's breast and pale lilac, with a rose-colored vest and lace sleeves." Another of his women characters wears "a wrap of cherry-colored plush, trimmed with white fur and lined with steel-blue silk."

Mr. Maarten Maartens arrays a lady in "a simple evening frock of crushed strawberry crépon, with ripe strawberry-silk ribbons, and crimson lace on the front."

George Meredith, shifting the responsibility in part, says that "millinery would tell us that she wore a fichu of thin white muslin crossed in front over a dress of the same light stuff trimmed with deep rose. She carried a gray-silk parasol traced at the borders with green creepers."

One wonders whether the last word refers to vines or caterpillars.



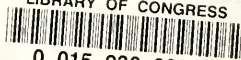


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